World Chronicle

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GUEST: Javier Solana
High Representative for the Common
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JOURNALIST: Ian Williams, The Nation

MODERATOR: Michael Littlejohns

EUROPE AND THE UNITED NATIONS – WORKING TOGETHER

For many years the European Union has been an important voice in many areas where the United Nations also works such as in the fields of human rights, social and economic matters, and development issues. With all the challenges facing the international community, how can the European Union and the United Nations more fully work together toward global peace and security? In this edition of World Chronicle, Javier Solana, European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, discusses international relations and crisis management in the new era dominated by international terrorism.

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Production Assistant: Saliha Bouima

ANNOUNCER: From United Nations Headquarters in New York, this is **World Chronicle**, an unedited interview programme about major global issues.

Here now to introduce our guest is the host of today's **World Chronicle**.

LITTLEJOHNS: I'm Michael Littlejohns, and this is **World Chronicle**.

Conflict prevention, crisis management and peace-building have long been at the heart of both the United Nations and the European Union's work. Regional organizations like the European Union have frequently supported the United Nations' primary role of maintaining international peace and security. What challenges face such cooperative efforts – both global and regional – in this new era dominated by international terrorism?

Our guest today is Javier Solana, the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. Joining me to talk to Mr. Solana is Ian Williams of *The Nation*.

Mr. Solana, welcome to **World Chronicle**.

Mr. High Representative, as the Chinese say, we live in interesting times. We are dominated by the problem of terrorism as we just mentioned in the introduction, there is the problem of Afghanistan – how to reconcile the factions in Afghanistan – and, of course, always with us is the problem of the Middle East. What is your impression of the prospects for bringing these three dominating areas under some sort of international control and taking the threats out of them?

SOLANA: Well, you have pointed out the three probably most important problems that we have on the agenda today and the three problems which are very linked to the work of the United Nations, and three problems in which the European Union is very much engaged. I mean the fight against terrorism is something which every civilized country has to feel engaged. The question of Afghanistan is important because it is the first failed state that has given coverage in a very clear manner to terrorism. And we have with us for a good number of years the problem of the Middle East and we hope very much that at this time, this time of crisis but at the same time a time of optimism like every crisis can provide, we have to give the most important impulse to the solution of this conflict of the Middle East. I am hopeful that we will be able to tackle the three problems and have a better world once the three problems are tackled and tackled properly.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Solana, we read here in the United States about misgivings among the European general public about American policy, not only in the Middle East but the military action in Afghanistan. People get very upset when they see television footage of civilian casualties, et cetera. How negative, if it is negative at all, is the reaction in Europe?

SOLANA: Well, I think that there is solidarity of the European countries, the European citizens, the European institutions with the coalition at this point in time is total. From the very beginning, from September the 11th until today, there has not been a single breach of support, of understanding of what we are doing together. The fight against terrorism is not only a fight, a military fight -- and probably the centre of gravity of the fight against terrorism will not be military, it will be more on the information side, a change of intelligence -- stopping the money that goes to these organizations. But we have a problem, a particular problem now with a country, or with a foreign country, that has supported and is supporting terrorism and therefore it is important that this battle, this battle that has a military component is won. In the last days we have had important -- important, if I may say good news – but we have to maintain our attention so that as we have seen in Afghanistan over the last 10 years let's say, the final solution has been achieved, or arrived at. And we have this time, with the leading role of the United Nations, with the cooperation of all the countries, to really see if Afghanistan is finally a stable country. And I'd like to say that we have only full sympathy for the citizens of Afghanistan that have to have their future but the United Nations and other countries are going to help them. The Afghanistan people -- I would like them to know through this programme that they will not be abandoned this time by the international community.

WILLIAMS: It is interesting. The big problem you raised of course was the Middle East and there you could say there's much less solidarity with the United States' position on the European Union's part. Just how big are those tensions? The European Union has consistently supported a Palestinian state and been seen as more pro-Palestinian than the U.S. administration, doesn't this cause some serious tensions at the moment?

SOLANA: I think that the last years and the last months at least we have been working very closely together. I have a conversation with Secretary Powell practically daily on the evolution of the Middle East. I think that we have a common final vision and we said it a long time ago. But the other day President Bush said very clearly that the division of the

Middle East at the end would be two states -- a Palestinian state and an Israeli state -- with secure borders. And I hope that with the international community engaged in that the Palestinians and the Israelis do get along and they can live together and the region as a whole is peaceful and prosperous and without any doubt, with the European Union having a solid relationship with all the countries of the region. But the problem that we have now is how to get out of this situation in which we are now. We have the final model. We have a mechanism to arrive at that model, which is the Mitchell Report in which I had the honour to participate with Senator Mitchell. And what we don't have now is the mechanism or the creativity to make the whole process start or get started. The violence is still there, the ceasefire is not maintained fully, and I think that that's what we have to concentrate our efforts on how to get the process started. Without a political perspective I think it will be very difficult to guarantee that the ceasefire is maintained.

WILLIAMS: I was just wondering -- I don't want to tempt you into being too undiplomatic but the contrast is expressed when the Prime Minister of Israel, Ariel Sharon, comes to the U.S. he is an honoured guest. If he were to go to Brussels I understand the Belgian Magistrate has an arrest warrant out for him for his previous role in the war in Lebanon. Do you think that sums up the contrast between European and American attitudes?

SOLANA: Well, that is a specific contrast because the rules and the laws of some of the countries of the European Union allowed for that. But this is an individual position of a citizen, or one citizen, or a group of citizens of a country of the European Union. But Mr. Sharon has visited all the countries of the European Union and has been received as the Prime Minister of a country. But I think, and I would like to underline that even after the meeting that we had not long ago in New York among the Secretary-General, Mr. Powell, Mr. Ivanov and myself, I think the coordination of all the efforts does go much better than ever before. Let's hope that this coordination bears fruit and bears fruit rapidly.

WILLIAMS: You're the coordinator for foreign policy and one of the problems with the European Union has been operating by consensus. And I think you would agree that 10 years ago when the Balkan crisis first erupted, the European Union showed it was not up to the task of having a common and effective foreign policy. You might disagree but I think most people would seem to think so. Have things evolved, have things changed?

SOLANA: Well, they have evolved very much. The time you were talking about I was Foreign Minister of my country so I know very well that period of time of the beginning of the war in the Balkans. And I have been following that ever since as Secretary-General of NATO and now as responsible for the foreign policy of the European Union. I think we have moved very much in that direction and at a certain rapid speed. Today, the European Union is a global actor. It wants to be a global actor in this globalized world and it could not be a different manner. The European Union is an important group of countries. It is going to be enlarged. By the time that we finalize the process of enlargement we will have twice the population of the United States, we will have four times the population of Japan, we will have a common currency and with those three elements it is impossible not to play a role, a major role, in the global policy of the world. And therefore we are going to do it and we are preparing ourselves and working already in that direction. And I think it is clear now from the problems in Afghanistan to the situation in the Middle East, to the Balkans, which still continues to be to a certain extent a problem, we are working in a very coordinated manner with a common foreign policy. We are beginning to have also capabilities on the military aspects for peacekeeping, for crisis management, so we are constructing a collection of countries which are willing to collectively play an important role in world affairs.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Solana, do you foresee any problems in relations with the other countries that you've just mentioned -- the United States, Japan, et cetera, China – when the European Union becomes this large entity you speak of?

SOLANA: No. Why should we have problems? We will have a coordinated policy on most of the issues. We are all members of the UN, all members on the World Trade Organization. We are part of the basic institutions of the world and what we should do is cooperate there to make this globalized world a better place. And I think if the big units of the world can cooperate in these basic institutions the world no doubt will be a better place.

LITTLEJOHNS: This last century was called the American century and I guess we are still in that American century in a way, although we have moved into the 21st century. Do you think that perhaps a little further down the road this will become the European century given what you've said about...

SOLANA: Well, I think it will be more of a globalized century than the century that will have a specific country or country's name. I think it will be the moment for the whole

world to work together. We have enormous problems. We have mentioned some at the beginning of the programme but we cannot forget poverty, we cannot forget many, many problems and sufferings of many, many people in the world. And it is the responsibility of the more developed countries – and we are part of the most developed countries – to maintain solidarity and compassion with our fellow citizens of this global world that they do not have the privilege that we have. And we have to have solidarity with them and we have to change our mentalities to be in a different wavelength vis-à-vis the rest of the world. So I would like to see the 21st century as a globalized century that has all these values – the values of solidarity, the values of compassion, the values of fighting together, to have a better place in this planet.

LITTLEJOHNS: In other words, a utopian century?

SOLANA: No, I am not a utopian. I mean I wouldn't mind being a utopian. I do know very well that a utopian is just a realist but it goes a little bit faster than others. So I would like to see and I insist to see the 21st century as being the century of all the citizenry of the planet working together to make it better. I think that the challenges are clear and well defined and it is the responsibility of those who have more power, who have more capability, to be generous enough and to help the others to make this world a better place.

LITTLEJOHNS: This is **World Chronicle**. Our guest is Javier Solana, the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.

WILLIAMS: I was listening to you before and you were talking about the various power blocs and how they were cooperating at the moment, and while this looks in a superficial way very united if you actually break it down China never mentions terrorism without mentioning separatism, which nobody else considers to be a crime. Russia, of course, has its own problems in Chechnya which it is now expecting Europe to support it in. The United States was banging on the doors in Damascus saying that Hezbollah was a terrorist organization a few weeks ago when the Arab world regards them as freedom fighters. So everyone has agreed they are against terrorism but how effective is this when everybody has a different definition of terrorism?

SOLANA: I think that I've never seen in my long political life a moment in which so many wish to be cooperative in different countries that a few years ago would have been impossible. I think that the cooperation that we have with the United States, that we have with Russia, that Russia has with the United States, with China, that we have with China, that we

have with South Africa, with so many countries in Latin America, with Brazil, et cetera, I have never seen such a wish for cooperation before. I think that we have entered a new period of time, a new century but not only a century, I think a new period of time in which cooperation should be the world order. Cooperation is the only way of solving the problems that we have. It is true that there are new answers and there are differences of opinion in some particular issues and it will continue to be with us. It is impossible to have a homogeneous world in which everybody from different traditions, different cultures go on to look at every problem in exactly the same manner. But I think that the world of today has moved kilometres in a short period of time in that direction, a direction of making this world a more cooperative place.

WILLIAMS: One of the steps forward I think most of us have noticed is the change in the attitude of the United States toward the United Nations and since September the11th especially, Colin Powell, I think, seems to have won a battle in Washington to make the US part of a multilateral coalition. But those of us who were here during the Gulf War saw this happen once before and in diplomatic terms it was almost a one-night stand. In the morning the United States went away and left the United Nations. Is that going to happen this time?

SOLANA: Well, it's true that after the Gulf War there were different actions of the United States but let me underline another – very important. After the Gulf War, the Madrid Conference on the Middle East was possible. That was a very positive step when the idea of peace for territories was achieved. It was after a great coalition that was created. It is true that not everybody was maintaining the coalition for a long time but it was also positive steps following up that coalition. And I would like to insist that the Madrid Conference was a fundamental one. Now, what is going to happen after this battle is over? I think that the coalition, or the sentiment of participation, the sentiment of cooperation, will be maintained for a longer period of time – let's hope for a long, long, long period of time – and in order to continue creating a coalition to fight against other problems that we have. I would like to underline poverty, I would like to underline the question of illnesses which are making dramatic damage in parts of the world. I don't think it is fair that as the world moves round some countries get richer and others get more and more poor. I think that this is the moment to have responsibility for those who have the possibility to have a more leading role in the world. And this century should be the century in which these problems are tackled and tackled with generosity.

WILLIAMS: Do you think it would be utopian to expect the United States to follow on its spirit of multilateralism and sign on for the International Criminal Court or the Kyoto Protocols on emissions?

SOLANA: That is not going to be an easy task but I think countries should learn that even when you are the most powerful country you are vulnerable and therefore you are not alone and you cannot act alone; that you need others. And therefore that lesson should not be forgotten because the time will come in which they may need others again, and maybe that time the others will not be ready to help unless there is the sentiment that you participate with others not only when you need it but always. And that is the philosophy of things that I would like to be seen. I think that the behaviour of the Secretary of State, Mr. Powell, has been in that sense modalic.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Solana, you have spoken several times about international poverty. The European Union has been extraordinarily generous toward developing countries -- billions of dollars. Do you think the United States has done all that it might or should in this area? I mean the richest country in the world. There seems to be some resistance in the Congress toward spending more money in developing countries, giving them more overseas assistance.

SOLANA: I don't want to judge the policy of any other country. What I can say is that the European Union countries and the European institutions as such are the most important donors of economic aid in the world. That means that we have certain values and those values that we cherish very much – the values of compassion with others, et cetera, the values of tolerance -- these are the values that build up the European Union and I would like very much to see those values maintained forever. Others have probably to adapt their mentalities to the new realities and the new realities – no doubt one of them is that the fight against poverty is an obligation of the richer countries. Now, the fight against poverty is not only giving money. I think there are other elements to the fight against poverty that isn't necessarily just giving money. I mean creating structures, helping to create administrations which are not corrupt. There are many other things that have to be done in order to profit really from the money which is given. Sometimes the money is given but it doesn't arrive to the people who need it really because the governments are corrupt or the structures are not prepared for that. So there are a lot of things that can be done to help the underdeveloped

countries, or the countries that suffer war now, which is of course money, resources, but not only resources, structures but teaching how to or helping them to administer better, et cetera, is as important as the money that goes.

WILLIAMS: It's interesting you should say this because I don't know whether you saw his speech this week, but President Museveni of Uganda gave a very eloquent and somewhat eccentric speech. But he made the very strong point that what the developing world needed was not aid but open access for its agricultural products behind high tariff walls in of all places of course, the European Union and the United States.

SOLANA: Sure. As I said, there are many other things. I mean money is important no doubt, resources are important, and resources may be directly given or they may be indirectly given by opening markets and letting products be exported. And I think these days the negotiations which are taking place for a new round under WTO is fundamental and it's fundamental for the balance in the world and to help the underdeveloped countries, or the countries which are less developed. And the rich countries have to have the generosity of opening their markets more.

WILLIAMS: Can the European Union actually surmount its own common agricultural policy?

SOLANA: I hope that the European Union will be also able to overcome some of the difficulties for their common agricultural policy and open their markets more in the near future. This is something that is irreversible I am sure.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Solana, I wonder if you would mind talking a little bit about relations between the United Nations and the European Union and vice versa. I presume that they are very cordial and you have a very useful relationship, but tell us a bit about it.

SOLANA: Well, the first thing I would like to say is that relations with the Secretary-General are splendid. The friendship that I entertain with Mr. Kofi Annan – we worked together when I was Minister for my own country in Bosnia. He was there at that time so we are good friends for a long, long period of time and we share our common vision of the world, or a certain common vision of the world. But beyond that the European Union countries are no doubt very important reporters of the United Nations...

LITTLEJOHNS: Including financially?

SOLANA: Including financially, no doubt about that. And then we pay our dues, we pay them properly and on time, et cetera. We contribute to all the operations or most of the operations of peacekeeping that the United Nations has. And I would like to say now that we have opened a new way of cooperation. As you know, the European Union is going to have military capabilities for peacekeeping and we are cooperating just about in a permanent manner so that these mechanism that we create within the European Union are not only compatible but can be added to operations that are led by the European Union -- by the United Nations. So we are working really very, very closely on crisis management and all the assets that we have and that we will have in the near future, will be at the disposal no doubt of the United Nations team.

WILLIAMS: It sounds very wonderful but aren't you recreating the Austro-Hungarian Army? Lots of different contingents? Will it hold up under serious pressure?

SOLANA: No, because we are not creating an army. An army is to fight wars. What we are trying to create is capabilities for peacekeeping, for crisis management. This is the type of...

LITTLEJOHNS: Peace-building as well I presume?

SOLANA: Oh, peace-building of course. But that is the type of problem that we are facing. Lately we are not really facing conventional wars in which one state declares war on another. That is not the typical operation in which the United Nations or the European Union will be engaged. We will be much more engaged in situations like Bosnia, like Kosovo, like East Timor -- operations of that type which are, unfortunately, more common nowadays.

LITTLEJOHNS: Are you optimistic about the way things are going to develop in the next few years given the intense crises that we confront?

SOLANA: Well, I wouldn't be here if I were not an optimist therefore yes, I am optimistic. I know I am not a naive politician thinking that everything is going to resolve like that but I am optimistic in the sense that the deep forces which are now in place, the moral forces, I think they're trying to work in the right direction and on the right track. In that sense I am an optimist, yes.

LITTLEJOHNS: Mr. Solana, that's all the time we have. Thanks for being with us on this edition of **World Chronicle**.

Our guest has been Javier Solana, the European Union's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. He was interviewed by Ian Williams of *The Nation*.

I'm Michael Littlejohns. Thank you for joining us. We invite you to be with us for the next edition of **World Chronicle**.

ANNOUNCER: Transcripts of the programme may be obtained free of charge by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to **World Chronicle**, United Nations, Room S-827L, New York, N.Y., 10017.

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